



# REOPENING GUIDANCE MUSEUMS & LIBRARIES

Reopening museums and libraries safely and responsibly is vital for both the local economy and the well-being of our community. As museums and libraries reopen, there are important steps you can take to minimize the spread of COVID-19 in Harris County.

## Recommendations Before Reopening

- Conduct routine HVAC maintenance and change air filters
- Cleaning staff should [clean and disinfect](#) all areas including theaters, offices, bathrooms, and concessions areas, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces
  - Clean dirty surfaces with soap and water
  - Next, disinfect surfaces using products that meet [EPA's criteria for use against SARS-Cov-2](#), the virus that causes COVID-19, and that are appropriate for the surface
  - Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products for concentration, application method, contact time, and required personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Operations can begin after completing the cleaning and disinfection procedures

## Help Protect Staff and Visitors

- [Follow CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfection, handwashing, and social distancing](#)
- Screen employees before entering the building for symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath, or known close contact with a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19
- Have employees wash hands when entering the building and provide hand sanitizer at accessible locations

- Make sure soap and paper towels are available at all restroom hand sinks. Keep hand sanitizer available for staff and customers
- Visibly place signage to encourage frequent hand washing and other ways to help stop the spread
- Require all employees to wear face coverings such as a mask, cloth mask, bandana, scarf or shield to protect others
- If using gloves, make sure gloves are in good condition, no holes or visible dirt
- Change gloves often or after each task, washing hands each time gloves are changed
- Use floor tape or visual markers to ensure staff and visitors are practicing social distancing especially in areas where lines may form
- Increase routine cleaning frequencies and use approved disinfectants for restrooms, high traffic, and high touch customer use areas
- Use contactless payment options if available or limit contact during transactions
- Disinfect any items that customers use

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### Planning for Absenteeism

- Determine how you will operate with a reduced staff if employees cannot work due to illness, staying home to care for sick family members and those who must stay home to watch their children
- Prepare to institute flexible workplace and leave policies
- Cross-train employees to perform essential functions, so the workplace can operate even if key employees are absent

### Free COVID-19 Testing is Available for Everyone

We encourage business owners and employees to get free testing at a testing site. The updated online self-assessment tool is confidential and designed to serve the public in the Greater Houston area. To register for testing, visit <http://covidcheck.hctx.net/>. For those who do not have access to the online tool, call **832-927-7575** to get scheduled for testing. Free testing is available regardless of citizenship status and for those who are uninsured.

Employees should **not** return to work if they are sick. If an employee has a sick family member they live with or has been near an ill person, they should notify their employer immediately.

Please go to [www.hcphtx.org](http://www.hcphtx.org) for any additional information on how to keep yourself or employees safe during this pandemic.

\*People at higher risk for severe illness are those who are 65 or older, especially those with chronic lung disease; moderate to severe asthma; chronic heart disease; severe obesity; diabetes; chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis; liver disease; or weakened immune system.

### Additional Information is Available

[The Governor's Report to Open Texas](#)  
[CDC Business & Employer Resources](#)

## CHECKLIST FOR MINIMUM RECOMMENDATIONS

### Health Protocols for Your Facility

- ☐ Block off items of your facility that are frequently touched, such as tabletops, and countertops, to prevent the spreading of germs between parties
- ☐ Regularly and frequently clean and disinfect any commonly touched surfaces, such as doorknobs, tables, chairs, handrails, and restrooms
- ☐ Disinfect any items that come into contact with customers
- ☐ Make hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or similar disinfectant readily available to employees and customers
- ☐ Visibly placed signage at the retailer to remind everyone of the best hygiene practices
- ☐ For facilities with more than 10 employees, contractors, or volunteers present at one time, consider having an individual exclusively or partially dedicated to ensuring the health protocols adopted by the facility are successfully implemented and followed

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## Health Protocols for Serving Your Customers

- Encourage using remote ticketing option to help manage capacity limitations
- For museums and libraries providing food service to visitors:
  - Do not leave condiments, silverware, flatware, glassware, or other traditional tabletop items on an unoccupied table
  - Provide single-use (non-reusable) condiments portions, upon request only
  - Clean and disinfect the area used for dining (table, etc.) after each group of customers depart the museum/library
  - Use disposable menus (new for each patron)
  - Have wait staff sanitize or wash hands between interactions with customers
- Museums and libraries with counter food service for visitors:
  - Provide condiments or flatware only in single-use, individually wrapped items upon request only
  - Employees, volunteers, and contractors must follow proper food-handling protocols
  - Disinfect any items that come into contact with customers
  - Use contactless payment options or limit contact during payments

## Health Protocols for Your Employees

- Train all employees and contractors on appropriate cleaning and disinfection, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette
- Screen employees and contractors before coming into the gym or exercise facility or class:
- Send home any employee or contractor who has any of the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19:
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Loss of taste or smell
  - Diarrhea
  - Feeling feverish or measured temperature greater than  $> 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$
  - Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19
- Do not allow employees or contractors with new or worsening signs or symptoms listed above to return to work until:
  - If the employee or contractor **is diagnosed with COVID-19**, they may return to work when all three of the following criteria are met:
    - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
    - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (having no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications)
    - The individual has improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
      - If the employee or contractor has COVID-19 symptoms and does not get tested or evaluated by a medical professional, the individual **is assumed to have COVID-19**. The individual may not return to work until the individual has completed the same three-step criteria listed above
      - If the employee or contractor has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to work before completing the above self-isolation period, the individual **must obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual to return to work based on an alternative diagnosis**
- Do not allow an employee or contractor with known close contact to a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 to return to work until the end of the 14 day self-quarantine period from the last date of exposure (with an exception granted for healthcare workers and critical infrastructure workers)
- Have employees and contractors wash or sanitize their hands upon entering the gym or exercise facility
- Have employees and contractors maintain at least 6 ft separation from other individuals. If such distancing is not feasible, other measures such as face covering, hand hygiene, cough etiquette<sup>3</sup>, cleanliness, and sanitation should be rigorously practiced
- If a gym or exercise facility or class provides a meal for employees and/or contractors, the gym or exercise facility is recommended to have the meal individually packed for each individual
- Consider having all employees and contractors wear cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth). If available, employees should consider wearing non-medical grade face masks

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